Agreement on border trade with Myanmar

683. SHRI G.G. SWELL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Myanmarese Deputy Foreign Minister visited India in January and an agreement on border trade was signed between the two countries;

(b) if so, what are the main features of the agreement; and

(c) whether Government have made any study of the Myanmarese internal situation before signing the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Myanmarese Deputy Foreign Minister H.E.U. NYUNT SWE visited India in January, 1994. He was accompanied by Lt. Col. KYAW MYINT Director General, Directorate of Trade, Ministry of Trade. A Border Trade Agreement between the two countries was signed on 21.1.1994 in New Delhi.

(b) The salient features of the Agreement are:

(i) The Border Trade will be conducted through designated Customs Posts in either country. Initially, Morch and Champai in India have been designated.

(ii) Exchange of locally produced commodities by the people living along both sides of the Indo-Myanmar border will continue as per the prevailing customary practice.

(iii) Trade under this Agreement may be conducted in freely convertible currencies or in currencies mutually agreed upon by the two countries, including through counter trade arrangements.

(c) The draft Border Trade Agreement had been under discussion between the two countries for some time. The Agreement was signed after taking into account all relevant factors.

Effect of Dunkel Draft on the Poor

684. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that because of signing of the Dunkel Draft at Geneva the poor will have to bear its brunt and it will have a highly negative impact on agricultural growth and will jeopardise the rights of farmers to control the he means of production and will adversely affect agricultural support and subsidies for farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what measures have been taken or are proposed to be taken by Government to counter the ill effects of signing the Dunkel Draft?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) No Sir. The Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture will not lead to any negative impact either on growth of Agriculture in India or on the means of production.

Direction to Destroy Raisins

685. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the High Court of Madras has directed to destroy the raisins (dried grapes) imported by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam through the State Trading Corporation;

(b) whether Government have enquired into the circumstances under which the State Trading Corporation imported the raisins which were unfit for human consumption; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) Since the direction to destroy the import consignment of raisins has been given by Madras High Court to the Customs authorities, no formal enquiry has been made.

Visit of Indian delegation to Bangladesh

686. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

. (a) whether it is a fact that a high level Indian delegation headed by the Minister of Commerce visited Bangladesh in December, 1993;

(b) if so, the details of discussion on bilateral trade between the two countries during the visit and the outcome thereof ;

(c) whether Government have offered an Indian expertise for Joint Ventures in that country; and

(d) if so, the areas identified for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The Commerce Minister led the Indian delegation to the 4th Meeting of the Indo-Bangladesh Joint Economic Commission held in Dhaka which included discussions on bilateral trade and measures to enhance trade flows in both directions.

(c) and (d) The areas identified for establishment of potential Joint Ventures in Bangladesh were sponge iron, automobile industry, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, pesticides, cement, small industrial projects, total quality management, environment and energy management etc.

Business Promotion Tour to South Africa

687. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the former President of the Federation of Indian Export Organisation (FIEO) went on a promotion tour to South Africa alongwith a delegation to sign a joint venture agreement on export of new products and transfer of technology;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the benefit to exports by such a joint venture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) Shri Ramu S. Deora, the Former President of FIEO led a 103 Member business delegation to South Africa from 23.1.94 to 1-2-94 to establish contacts with South African businessmen, to promote bilateral trade, third country exports and transfer of technology between the two countries. No Joint venture agreement was signed with any South African entrepreneur.

(c) According to the estimate of FIEO, the two way trade worth over US $ 32 mn was negotiated during the visit and is expected to subsequently increase significantly.

Correspondence of MPs with Ministry

688. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of letters written by the Members of Parliament to Commerce Ministry during the period from 1.4.90 to 31.3.93 alongwith year-wise details thereof;

(b) the number of letters out of them that were acknowledged;